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Allandale Neighbor

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46th Allandale Annual July 4th Parade

Caroline and Joe Reynolds, joe-rey@texas.net, 454-8880

Dress up, wave a flag, and enjoy the day! The Allandale Neighborhood Association invites all of the neighbors and friends to participate and have a great time at the 46th Annual Independence Day Parade on Thursday July 4th, at 9:00 a.m. We will follow the usual route, beginning at the corner of White Rock and Bullard Drive, marching up Bullard to Gullett Elementary. Parade participants will begin gathering around 8:30 a.m. The Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Brownie Troops will lead off the parade, followed by decorated wagons, bicycles, tricycles, strollers, pets, children, big kids, antiques cars, other cars and floats all waiting to be judged for the entry awards.

The presenting of the entry awards, speeches, free refreshments, music, singing and visiting with friends and neighbors will take place at the end of the parade route at Gullett Elementary. This is the oldest and largest neighborhood 4th of July parades in Austin. Elected officals have been invited. Hundreds of people will line the streets to watch the elaborately and creatively patriotic decked out parade participants.

It is the spirit of the day that makes everyone have fun! So bring your chairs and sit or stand along the way even if you are not in the parade. Then come to Gullett, see all of the festivities and enjoy a Jim-Jim WaterIce ($1.25, 25 cents of which goes to ANA) and Amy's Ice Cream.

If you would like to volunteer (plan the parade, being a judge, serving refreshments, handing out entry cards, helping with the program, decorating the grounds and parade route and organizing and coordinating the parade) **please contact Caroline and Joe Reynolds at 454-8880 or joe-rey@texas.net.** ❖

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ANA Executive Committee Meeting 2/22/06

Kay Newell, Kayn7@austin.rr.com

John Keohane stated that he, his wife Cynthia, and Phyllis Brinkley spoke to the McMansion issue during the public input phase. There was a general discussion on zoning and replatting.

Tom Linehan would like to see the Allandale Neighborhood Association articulate what its exact position is on zoning. This will help to eliminate the confusion surrounding what the ANA is saying as opposed to one person's opinion. The suggestion was made that the rhetoric be toned down. ANA will solicit input on and draft a position statement for the Executive Committee's consideration before posting it on the listserve. Too much confusion exists as to the intent of ANA as relates to zoning and replatting.

Patrick Manley said the city is beginning work to fix a leaking sewer line behind Bull Creek. Next year the city will come back to work on the creek itself to reduce neighborhood flooding.

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To volunteer to help with Allandale's Annual 4th of July Parade,
please contact Caroline and Joe Reynolds at joe-rey@texas.net or 454-8880

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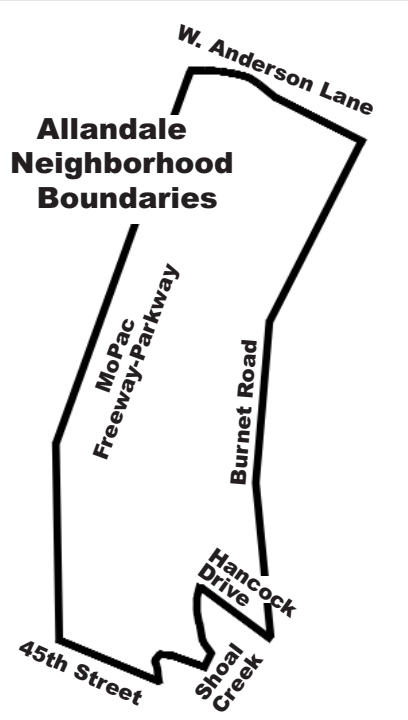
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MEMBERS Pat Briggs, Jeff Frank, Jerre Heaton, David Levine, Patrick Manley, Gerry Schwartz, Cheryl Silver and Wendy Wilson.

The Executive Committee meets the fourth Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at the Yarborough Library, 2200 Hancock Drive. Meetings are open to the public.

Allandale Police District epresentative

David Crowder, 974-5545,
david.crowderjr@ci.austin.tx.us



ANA Exectutive Meeting

Continued from front page

Gretchen said Allandale's Neighborhood Planning will take place at the end of the year. Allandale NA will join with Highland Park West Balcones Area NA, Shoal Creek North NA, and potentially one other NA in the neighborhood planning process. Anyone interested in participating in this process, please contact Gretchen at gvaden@austin.rr.com or 507-4497. An initial meeting will be held early this summer.

Dane Larson working on submitting a request to the city council for a commercial overlay for the proposed liquor store at 6800 Burnet Rd. Zoning and platting has approved the change to CS-1; the next step is the city council hearing. Paul Nagy will write the letter to the city council requesting an overlay, stating the space can be used only for a liquor store in an attempt to prevent the liquor from becoming a cocktail lounge, adult oriented business, etc in the future.

Grace Garcia who has previously been to the Executive Committee meeting concerning Varsity Properties and six unrelated over-18 in a single-family home. Grace said that this will be included in the McMansion code and it will be reduced to four unrelated over-18 in a single family home. Paul Nagy motioned that ANA sign a letter approving of the amendment change from six unrelated to four unrelated over-18 in a single family home. Jeff seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The letter was signed and given to Grace to present to the Austin City Council.

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Subscribe to Allandale's Yahoo! newsgroup!



All Allandale residents are invited to join the neighborhood email forum to share ideas, ask or answer questions, seek or give advice and receive neighborhood updates. Go to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/allandale/ to sign up. Click on "Join This Group" then follow instructions. Contact Paul Nagy at pdnagy@alumni.utexas.net with any questions.

Cynthia Keohane will accept the position as ANA's representative to ANC (Austin Neighborhood Council) whose meetings are the same time and day as ANA's. John stated that ANC requires $35 for membership. Jeff motioned to write a check to ANC for ANA's $35 membership. Gerri Heaton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Consuelo Akin expressed her concerns over the emails to the City Council concerning the sidewalks having the appearance of being backed by the neighborhood association, and having expressed the opinion that the sidewalks be placed on only one side of Shoal Creek without consulting the neighborhood.

In the future no one associated with ANA in the capacity of Board Member, Executive Committee Member, Chair, or any other position with ANA will use the name of the Allandale Neighborhood Association when speaking their position in any manner when expressing their personal opinion. The person should say that they are speaking for themselves not ANA unless what they say has been voted on by the Executive Committee or ANA.

John Keohane is arranging for Allandale neighbors to participate in the ANC (Austin Neighborhoods Council) City Council Candidate Forum to be held March 22, Austin Energy, 721 Barton Springs Rd, 6:45 pm Networking, 7:00 pm Program. The candidates will be provided with a questionnaire prior to the meeting. At the forum, additional questions will be asked as well as having questions from the audience. More information will be posted on the listserve and website as it becomes available.

Thanks to John Keohane for setting up the AISD Board Candidates Forum for places 4, 8, and 9. It will take the place of an ANA General Meeting on April 26th. We will have a social time/mingling from 6-6:30 pm, where you will be able to meet the School Board candidates. Then we can have the candidates address the members. There will be a question and answer period following their talks. We look forward to a strong response from the neighborhood for this important event. More information will be posted on the listserve and website as it becomes available.

Paul Nagy discussed It's My Park Day—the city has done some dead wooding and will continue with this in August or September. Ball moss removal will be done in colder months. The Parks Foundation wants It's My Park Day to involve a more proactive approach to caring for the oak trees along Shoal Creek in Allandale. The city will provide gloves, water, etc to volunteers. They would like to have the dirt removed from the roots of the oak trees, drill holes and put sand in them to facilitate water reaching the roots of the oak trees. Paul needs someone to head up this project—if you are interested please contact Paul Nagy.

Each year ANA gives Gullett & Lamar $500 each to use for items cut from the school budget. This year we are also giving $500 to the Gullett Teaching Garden. Susan made the motion to write the three checks. Patrick Manley seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Caroline and Joe Reynolds have come forward to act as the July 4th Parade coordinators.

The meeting was adjourned. ❖

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ANA Executive Committee Meeting With Austin Neighborhood Council 3/06

Kay Newell, Kayn7@austin.rr.com

The Allandale Neighborhood Association membership was invited to participate in the Austin Neighborhood Council (ANC) Candidate Forum on March 22, 2006. This was in lieu of the ANA Executive Committee meeting for March. A questionnaire was sent to all Council candidates by ANC, and additional questions were asked by the audience during the forum. After the Q&A segment, participating ANC members voted on endorsements. For a listing of the questions and answers, and the endorsements by ANC, please visit their website www.ancweb.org, and go to "Latest additions to site—3/18." ❖

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From the Zoning Chair

John Keohane, keohane@prodigy.net, 371-3853

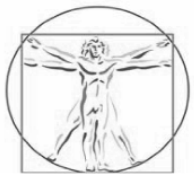
A next-door neighbor has a trashy house that is a fire hazard. We are working that case. Loud music/noise from outside Allandale, bothers a young family, with a baby less than a year old at odd hours late at night and early in the morning. We've assisted in this one, also.

Robert Frost was the poet of the inaugural address of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy. In his address, President Kennedy stated that "a journey of a thousand miles, begins with a single step." In my opinion, the decline of a neighborhood begins with singular violations. In the words of the poem the "Walrus and the Carpenter" in Lewis Carroll's "Through the Looking Glass," "and thick and fast they came at last, and more and more and more."

It is my goal as zoning chair to watch zoning and platting and permitting, and to do that not as one person, but as a group of concerned and interested neighbors and citizens. It is not my goal to live with theory alone, but to use good zoning/platting/permitting practices.

For those who see specific problems and want help, write me an email with your name, phone number, and address, and the address and situation that you think is wrong. I'll work with you. The zoning committee will work with you as well. We had 18 at our second meeting since I was selected as zoning chair in January.

For those of you who want to do more the zoning committee has space for you. ❖



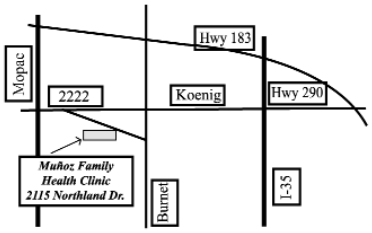
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Neighborhood Planning Meeting

Tom Linehan and Kerry Kimbrough tlinehan@austin.rr.com

Saturday's meeting, April 15, at City Hall was entitled "Neighborhood Planning in Austin—Next Steps." 150 or so people were in attendance.

For those like me who have not been involved in the neighborhood planning process, the meeting was a good primer for understanding the challenges of neighborhood planning. The meeting began with Patricia Wilson, Professor of UT's Community and Regional Planning program reporting on the results of a semester-long study on neighborhood planning. The class looked at 5 Austin neighborhoods that have gone through the planning process as well as reported on what is going on elsewhere in Texas and the country with regard to neighborhood programs. You can find a "Summary of the Lesson's Learned" as well as the text of their study at their website. The comments from those involved in putting together their neighborhood plan in Austin were enlightening and are worth reading as we embark on our own neighborhood plan. Hearing how other cities approach neighborhood planning provides insight into how they addressed some of the challenges of preparing and implementing plans. In Fort Worth, for example, neighborhoods compete for a $1.2 million grant that is applied to implementation of the plan for the winning neighborhood.

After Professor Wilson's summary, we split off into smaller groups for the balance of the 5 1/2 hour meeting and worked through vision statements, our thoughts on the degree to which the City should be involved in the process, what we thought were the top three priorities for the neighborhood planning process, and the wrapup where the results were summarized and reported to the group as a whole.

The group I participated in listed the following as the top three priorities for neighborhood planning: 1.) establish density goals for the neighborhood, 2.) come up with the neighborhood plan first and then talk about zoning, and 3.) ensure the infrastucture and process is in place to implement and enforce the plan. Of course, this was just the priorities identified by one group out of about a dozen there. Other Allandale representatives at the meeting were Phyllis Brinkley, Cheryl Silver, Frances Allen, and Kerry Kimbrough. They participated in separate groups and I encourage them to share the priorities that emerged from their groups. Check the Neighborhood Planning Conference website https://webspace.utexas.edu/paw/381_website/index.html for a summary of the meeting and to learn more about the findings from the school's study. I checked in with Gretchen Vaden about Allandale's planning process. She tells me she will have something to report later but the wheels are turning and we will be getting underway in May.

Here are Kerry's comments about Saturday's meeting:

This workshop made me realize that Allandale is in a favorable position to begin our neighborhood plan. There is a lot of wisdom out there for us to tap, from other neighbors and from city staffers who have been pioneering this process. This workshop demonstrated a real commitment from Council and city staff to make neighborhood plans an effective part of city governance. It was clear that earlier efforts have involved a lot of struggle. But it was equally clear that this was an attempt to reach out and find ways for everyone to work more harmoniously. ❖

Get to know your neighbors–organize a block party!

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The Walking Bus

Caroline Reynolds, crsolns@texas.net, 454-8880

Open the newspaper and there are stories about obesity and saving energy. The EPA is concerned about the air pollution levels in Austin. There is a solution to all of these issues—the walking bus.

Our children board school buses for an unsupervised, passive, intellectually dull or worse ride to school. In the afternoon they repeat the experience on the ride home. Year after year, our children grow plumper and less fit. Is it any wonder if they sit on a bus, walk a short way to classes, then ride the bus home to watch TV or play computer games?

The Walking Bus IS a better way that was pioneered in Britain. Read about it below, and if you are interested, contact me at the address below. If there is sufficient interest, we'll plan a meeting at the Yarborough library to organize Walking Buses for next fall.

The walking bus is the latest safe, fun and healthy way to travel to and from school.

Each walking bus has an adult 'driver' at the front and an adult 'conductor' bringing up the rear. The children walk to school in a group along a set route picking up additional 'passengers' at specific 'bus-stops' along the way.

The bus runs rain or shine and everyone wears a reflective jacket. Along the way children can chat with their friends, learn valuable road safety skills and gain some independence.

All walking buses are different. They vary to suit the needs of the children and their parents. Some schools have a number of walking buses and some only have one. Some walking buses operate only on certain days; others operate only in morning or afternoon.

A walking bus at your school could be set up to match the availability of the volunteers.

Exercise. The walking bus provides a chance for everyone to take part in regular exercise. Evidence shows that more active children are likely to become more active adults. *Just a 15 minute journey to and from school can contribute to half the daily recommended exercise for children. (Reference: "A Safer Journey to School, the Pedestrians Society," 2000).

Safety. Children who walk to school on a walking bus are part of a large and visible group which is supervised by adults and seen safely into school. This reassures parents who are concerned about letting their children walk on their own.

Road Sense. The walking bus helps children learn pedestrian skills so that when they begin to walk on their own they are better equipped to deal with traffic.

Socializing. The journey to school gives children a chance to talk and make new friends. When they've arrived at school they've done their chatting and are more ready to learn.

Environment. Every journey made on foot helps reduce the amount of traffic around schools, which will help reduce air pollution and improve our local environment for everyone.

Did you know that research has proved that if you make a short journey in a car, you are exposed to more air pollution, than if you walk? By using a walking bus, children will have fresh air to wake them up before settling down to work in class.

To be visible, pupils on the walking bus wear some kind of fluorescent/reflective clothing. The bright colors make chil-

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dren very visible to drivers during the day, while the reflective strips shine brightly in the beam of headlights on dark days.

Being part of the walking bus is a privilege for pupils, so parents must explain to their children the importance of being safe on the walking bus. Behavior that endangers others may be reported to the school and, if necessary, the child may be removed from the walking bus.

For more information go to www.walkingbus.com. Anyone interested in starting a Walking Bus next fall should drop a note by email or writing to Caroline Reynolds at crsolns@texas.net or 2611 West 49th Street, 78731, who will organize a Yarborough Library meeting. If there is sufficient interest we would like to notify AISD and some of the hospitals and health groups of (y)our interest in this concept. ❖

Hello from Yarborough Branch Library

Bonita Snyder-Jones, Manager and Carol Friedrich, Assistant
454-7208

Summer fun at your local library, Folks! All over town, children can participate in the annual Summer Reading Program. Watch out for special programs and prizes. At Yarborough Branch, we have the special Adult Summer Reading program—as in past years, you can submit an entry form listing books you have read and be in a drawing for coupons to local restaurants. The program runs the six weeks from June 1-July 13—and you can enter once each week!

Meeting room signup for reservations 9/1/06 – 8/31/07 will start on July 7th. We will set out the reservation request forms that day; when you fill them out and turn them in, we will assign reservations in the order they are received. Letters of confirmation will be mailed out the first week of August.

June 8th is Ralph Yarborough's birthday—stop in and share some tea and cookies with us that day to honor our namesake. We will also have a special exhibit by the Creative Arts Society which runs from June 9 through July 19. This will be followed by a show from local painter Ambray Gonzales, August 8 through September 15.

Good news—Look for great improvements to our parking lot in July. Our part of the creek excavation will be finished and we hope that the contractor will pave the entire lot by the end of June. Thanks to everyone for your patience and good humor during this trying time when we have had only a small number of parking spaces. ❖





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The Dead End of 49th Street Block Party

Joe Reynolds, joe-rey@texas.net

Sunday Afternoon April 2, 2006 was the date for the 15th neighborhood party on 49th Street adjacent to the Shoal Creek Dam. The party is a place to socialize with many of the people you meet while walking. You learn their names [they become Chris, not "the slow Shelty"] and where they live. There's food, drinks, music, games. A contact list is distributed so you can remember those names and find that person you were talking to about compost. Kids get to know each other, not just adults. This was the 15th year, with the largest attendance, 220 or more. Music was by DJ Jahkarma.

An informal committee of folks who live close to the Strass—49th St intersection organizes things. This year Jackie and David Stence [the party's held in the street next to their house and all over their lawn] , Kelly and Sam Terry, Amy Wood and Todd Shaw, Monica and Geoff Mueller, Becky and Steve Reedy were the committee. Geoff Mueller and Joe Reynolds were the Burger Chefs. A small donation is solicited in the flyer announcing the date, to cover the burgers/dogs/BocaBurgers/drinks and paper goods. The rest of the spread is 'Bring to Share' and the sharing is spectacular.

Attendance is from many of the streets in the south of Allandale; mostly Strass, 49th, 49 ½ , Pembrook, Rue, Finley, Fiset, but also Chiappero, Oakmont, Shoalwood, Fresco, and Turnabout.

This year Doris Arp was given a plaque as the first recipient of a new annual award for neighborhood service named in her honor. Doris is one of the remaining 'original owners' who have lived in their houses since they were built in the 1950s. During her walks she collects litter and dispenses cheer.

The party was started by Dale Hersch who lived on Strass two houses from 49th, with help from David and Jackie Stence. Dale approached the Stences with the idea of a neighborhood gathering and wanted their OK since they would be impacted by the obvious place, the dead-end of 49th where it encounters Shoal Creek, just by the dam. The first few years the party was small, open but not widely publicized. Dale organized and funded it several years during August. Dale told various stories about why he held the party. It may have been his birthday, maybe not. Dale is a pilot for American Airlines and transferred to Miami. [He flies to Brazil and is now infamous for an incident involving visa photographs.] After Dale moved several neighbors decided to keep the party tradition and several more were held in August. The summer heat and conflict with vacations got the date moved to the spring. ❖

Photos Courtesy: Jackie Stence and Amy Wood











The Dead End of 49th Street Block Party, Take 2

Kim Meyer, kim @artisancd.com

"We'll supply the burgers, dogs and drinks, you bring the family, friends, a side dish and a blanket."

Since the first gathering 15 years ago, the party has grown from about 20, to 220 attendees. We have the best neighborhood in Austin!!!

The Dead End of 49th Street Block Party was started by Dale Hersch, who had just moved into 4706 Strass Dr., as a way to meet the neighbors. Mr. Hersch was a single pilot. He introduced himself to David and Jackie Spence and asked if they minded if he held it in the dead end of W 49th St. He bought some hamburgers and hot dogs, etc. and the Spences had a grill.

"The immediate neighbors were invited, and I think about 20 people showed up. Every year it got a little bigger." said Jackie.

Eventually, Dale married and was transferred to Florida to be near his aging parents. "We've carried on since then, only missing one year, I think." said Jackie.

In order to pull off the block party, there is a core "committee" of neighbors, who have annual assignments that range from making and delivering flyers, updating the phone lists, buying food and drinks, wrangling crafts for the kids, rounding up coolers and tables, corralling trusty grill-men to cook all the burgers and hot dogs and of course, disposing the trash and recycling.

"We've got great neighbors and I'm so glad to get the chance to know them," shared Jackie.

This small area of Allandale even has its own email group, thanks to Amy Wood. The Shoalmont group was created to share neighborhood news, help people find their lost pets, borrow strollers, recycle household items, etc. Currently the Shoalmont group has 60 members. To subscribe, you should live in the area bordered by Shoal Creek Blvd, Hancock Drive, Bull Creek and 45th Street. Send an email to shoalmont-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

This year, in addition to the block party, neighbors presented Doris Arp with two awards. One award was recognition from Keep Austin Beautiful. The other award was created by the neighbors and is called the "Doris Award" for being an outstanding neighbor. Doris is very deserving of both awards. Everyday she walks at least three miles through the neighborhood picking up trash. She has helped keep the Shoalmont area beautiful. ❖

How to have your OWN Block Party:

- Pick a date, and a rain date.
- Find an area to hold the party (dead ends and cul-de-sacs work best!)
- Make flyers stating the information about the block party.
- On the flyer, tell the neighbors that the burgers & dogs, drinks and paper products will be provided.
- In the RSVP section on the flyer ask for: names, address, number attending (adults and kids), how many burgers, hot dogs and/or veggie burgers are needed for that 'family.'
- Tell the neighbors to bring a side dish, a blanket or a chair.
- Ask for volunteers to grill, clean up, etc.
- Ask for a $3.50 donation to be dropped off ahead of time at a house or other location.
- Set a deadline for the RSVP, but realize that people will be dropping off way past the deadline, or be showing up anyway, so add some extra supplies to the count.
- A couple of days before the party: Shop (burgers, hot dogs, buns, condiments, paper ware, drinks)
- 2-3 hours before the party: Ice down the drinks, set out the tables, paper ware, buns and condiments.
- Some music is nice. (We're lucky, we've got "DJ Jahkarma" in our 'hood.') Keg and BYOB are optional. ❖

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Commander's Forum

John Keohane, keohane@prodigy.net, 371-3853

The Commanders Forum met Monday night, April 3, 2006 in Hyde Park. This was a good time to meet with police.

Allandale residents present included Phyllis Brinkley, Steven Zettner, Cynthia Keohane, and John Keohane.

Our own neighborhood officer, David Crowder, was not back at work yet. He was in a bad car accident, and was expected to go on limited service soon. I recognized the police lieutenant, Vanderwege, from previous meetings. He introduced me to Sergeant Patrick South. I introduced Steven Zettner to South. South was seeing to staffing until Officer Crowder is fully back in service. (He is now back in his office aas of April 14th.)

The Central West district of the Austin Police Department, is basically from I-35 west to the city limits, and from Town Lake north to Anderson Lane, excluding downtown. The commander of Central West part of Austin is Commander Calvin Smith, who mentioned two major items:

1) Shoal Creek Boulevard. This came out, almost immediately from him. He said he could put police on Shoal Creek Boulevard, and had at times. Citizens should know if they request this, that the police will be writing tickets, and they will be writing them to your children and your spouses.

2) Property crime. This is the most frequent crime in our area, particularly a problem with cars in shopping centers. His suggestion keep things hidden. Kids will break out a $500 window to get $5 worth of CDs.

I want to encourage more of you to go to the Commanders Forums. It is good opportunity to share ideas and interests with police in a non-crisis atmosphere. The police always provide plenty of beef and bread. Others attending bring a dish to share. ❖

City of Austin Code Enforcement is Restructuring the Way They Handle Code Violations

Paul Tomasovic, paul.tomasovic@ci.austin.tx.us, 974-2326, Speaker at the Commanders Forum

Zoning, Housing, and Property Abatement have been consolidated into one Division. (You no longer need to contact three different departments). You can now call one number (#311 available 24/7) to file a complaint for code violations. Code Inspectors will be crossed trained to enforce code violations in the three (Zoning, Housing, and Property Abatement) disciplines. (There will no longer be the need to have three inspectors go out to a site that has code violations in each discipline.)

The City was divided into four territories (North, South, East, West) and will have inspectors assigned to each area. These areas have been aligned with APD's car districts and the inspectors will be working closely with APD's District Reps.

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Starting January 1, 2006 Code Enforcement started handling all building, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing WORK WITHOUT PERMIT violations. Code Enforcement Inspectors can issue STOP WORK ORDERS to anyone who has started work without the required permits.

A new citation program is being developed so inspectors can write field citations for continued or repeat code violations. (Inspectors strive to obtain voluntary compliance.)

Seven additional inspectors will be hired by May 14th, and that will bring the total number of inspectors to 34; that's the highest number of Code Enforcement (Zoning, Housing, and Property Abatement) Inspectors since 1986. There will be seven inspectors assigned to the West District.

Code Enforcement was moved to the Solid Waste Department, and is now called Solid Waste Service Code Enforcement.

We believe that this restructuring of the Code Enforce-ment Services will increase response time, decrease compliance time, and increase the ability to enforce code violations. ❖

Write On! Austin—Writing Austin Lives

Deanna Couras Goodson, dgoodson@austin.rr.com

Back in April of 2003, the University of Texas's Humanities Institute began a citywide campaign called "Writing Austin Lives." Within a few months of the program's launch, nearly 800 residents of Austin had submitted their stories to the institute. They came from almost every zip code in the city. Some were written in Spanish.

Hundreds of these stories were donated to the Austin History Center, located on Guadalupe. One hundred and twenty seven of these personal experience pieces, along with images contributed by local shutterbugs, were chosen for an anthology which was published by the Austin History Center Association and Waterloo Press.

The anthology, Writing Austin Lives, received the Chronicle's "Best of Austin" award for "Best Local Authors." The anthology was also featured at the 2004 Texas Book festival. Now, it's sold in local area bookstores and used in classrooms across the city in composition and literature classes. Writing Austin Lives is a testament to life in Austin. As such, it was a natural fit for Mayor Will Wynn's 2005 Mayor's Book Club.

When the mayor announced his choice, he also issued a challenge to the community. Mayor Wynn wanted Austinites to not only read the book but also write about their own "Austin Lives." As a result, the APL (Austin Public Library), in conjunction with volunteers at the Metropolitan Austin Interactive Network, has set up a webspace for this project. It's called WriteOnAustin and the web address is: www.writeonaustin.org.

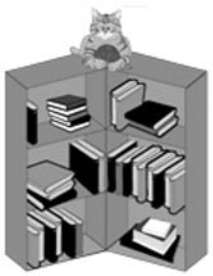
The community archive is growing. However, there's still room for you to submit your stories. It's easy. I did it. My story, entitled "I, Austinite," is up there along with those of many other Austin-area residents. This is a fantastic project and I'd encourage everyone in Allandale to take part in it. ❖

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AISD Board Candidate Forum

Gretchen Vaden gvaden@austin.rr.com

Thank you to everyone that attended the Aptil 26, 2006 AISD Board Candidate Forum. It was very informative and we appreciate the time the candidate's took to address those present.

The candidates present were: Vincent Torres, Ed Leo, Annette Lovoi, Karen Dulaney Smith, and Alberto Gonzales.

The election was Saturday, May 13. On the ballot were city council seats, AISD school board seats, ACC Board of Trustee seats and 7 City of Austin Charter Amendments.

Thank you again to the Ann Jarriel and the Gullett PTA for co-hosting the forum and providing the refreshments. Thank you to John Keohane for bringing the idea forth. Thank you to David Mintz for serving as moderator. Thank you to Susan Frank for handling the food.

And a thank you to Tom Linehan, Allandale Reporter webmaster, for covering the meeting, taking pictures and posting the information on our website, www.allandalereporter.org. ❖

Gecko Good News Column

Karen Moore, 453-5753

Gullett Elementary 50th Anniversary Celebration. 1956-2006. Gullett will be holding an Open House Celebration on September 30, 2006 (please note the date change) from 9 am to 12 noon. All former teachers and staff, parents, students, and all our neighbors are invited to attend. Join us and catch up with old friends, make new ones, and see and remember what makes Gullett special. It's going to be a whole neighborhood celebration. If you have any stories to tell us about Gullett, call 841-0346 and leave us a message or e-mail gullettpta@yahoo.com.

We need memorabilia for the 50th Anniversary Celebration! Do you have photos from your days at Gullett? Maybe old documents about the neighborhood that would be interesting? Yearbooks? Programs? Ribbons? The kids will be working on a history of this time period and creating displays to commemorate the different decades as well as a display of Gullett memorabilia. If you'd be so kind as to let us borrow your treasures we promise to get them back to you. Let us know by leaving us a message at 841-0346 or via e-mail at gullettpta@yahoo.com.

Our Native Texas Habitat Garden, a teaching garden, is off and running. Gullett's 4th grade ramp is being trans-

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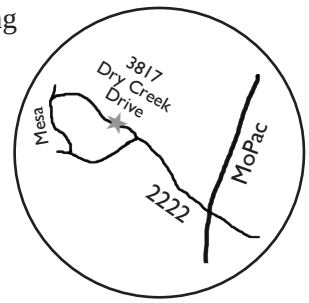
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formed from a barren stretch of weedy grass and a smattering of trees into a series of bermed planting beds, a dry streambed, and a crushed-stone path winding its way through a garden to be. Our wonderful parents began with the removal of the old and the installation of the hardscaping this spring. Our out-going 5th graders added a large container pond and stepping stones. This fall we will be adding soaker hoses, rainbarrels, etc, to make ready for the bulk of the plants in the spring of 2007. You can help too! If you or your business or organization would like to donate materials, funds, or labor toward this project, please call Pam Penick (302-3467).

You may have noticed a bit of construction around Gullett this summer. We are happy to report our bond improvements are being implemented with general repairs around the school. The final phase of our window replacement is scheduled to take place during the summer as well as a general cleaning and painting. We want to shine at our 50th Anniversary Celebration (September 30) for all of our neighbors!

Gullett Elementary would like to thank the Allandale Neighborhood Association for making a $500 donation to the school as well as a $500 donation to the Native Texas Habitat Garden. Thank you ANA—what great neighbors we have!

What is the Gullett Future Fund? The Gullett Future Fund is an endowment fund established in February 2005 to create a constant income source for future Gullett projects. All donations to the fund are tax deductible, the monies are professionally invested, and Gullett PTA is able to take out up to 5 percent of the earned interest each year.

The PTA needs a fund that can be relied upon in future years to support the projects that make Gullett so unique, such as our butterfly gardens, our koi pond, a new teaching garden, and caring for the many animals that help our children learn and grow. A contribution to the Gullett Future Fund would help fund projects for many years to come and is an excellent way to pay tribute to someone special and to the school.

Consider donating today—for our children's tomorrow. Contact Michelle Smith at michellesmith@mac.com to contribute and for more information. ❖

Drive Cautiously . . .
Watch out for children, pedestrians, bicyclists, and pets.

Pet Talk: Dangerous Mulch

By Cheryl Silver, csilver@austin.rr.com

Cocoa Mulch, which is sold in some garden supply stores, contains a lethal ingredient called "theobromine," the ingredient that is used to make all chocolate, especially dark and baker's chocolate, which is toxic to dogs. It is lethal to dogs and cats. It smells like chocolate and it really attracts dogs. They will ingest this substance and may die. Check what you are using in your garden.

Shoal Creek Boulevard Curb Islands

Phyllis Brinkley pbrinkley@austin.rr.com

The removal of the Shoal Creek Boulevard Curb Islands began around March 20, 2006 and was completed around the second week in April. In the 6500 block of Shoal Creek Boulevard crews dug to deep and hit a natural gas line. A Texas Gas Service crew repaired the leak and traffic was back to normal in about 45 minutes.

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Native-Plant Teaching Garden Takes Shape at Gullett Elementary

Pam Penick, 302-3467

Part of what makes Gullett such a unique and wonderful school is its embrace of nature: ducks, chickens, and turkeys enliven the kindergarten wing; a koi pond with a splashing waterfall beautifies a breezeway; butterfly gardens attract winged visitors; and chinchillas, a tarantula, and fish vie for attention in hallway aquariums.

In 2006-07, Gullett wants to build on its success by providing students with a new teaching garden, designed for entire classes to explore natural habitats and ecosystems.

The 4th-grade teachers, in concert with the PTA and landscape architect Patrick Smith (who is also a Gullett parent and Allandale neighbor), have designed a native habitat garden for the 4th-grade courtyard. This area will soon be transformed into a teaching garden with a large container pond, beautiful native plants, a raised bed for handicapped access, rustic seats arranged for outdoor learning, rain barrels to aid in water conservation, a dry streambed with a stone bridge, and even a Native American crop garden. The new garden will be an asset the whole school can use and enjoy.

You can help make this teaching garden a reality. We need to raise $8,000 to build and plant the first phase of the garden. Already we have raised $1,000. We are asking for support from the Allandale community and local businesses. Please consider making a donation—no amount is too small—to help grow Gullett's new garden.

For more information about this project, including volunteer needs, visit Gullett's website (http://www.gullettgeckos.org; click on Native Texas Habitat Garden under Quick Links). If you have any questions, contact Pam Penick (302-3467) or Ami McChesney (458-1862). Gullett PTA thanks you for your support! ❖

Donation Form

Native Texas Habitat Garden:
A Teaching Garden at Gullett

Your support is greatly appreciated! Please make check payable to Gullett PTA and mail to Gullett PTA, c/o Habitat Garden, 6310 Treadwell Blvd., Austin, TX 78757.

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Or circle one: $5 $10 $25 $50 $100 $500

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Northcross Mall

Joyce Basciano, jbasciano@austin.rr.com

The owners of the Northcross Mall property at 2525 West Anderson Lane are in the process of preparing for a permit for the demolition and redevelopment of the site. The scope of the project will involve the removal of the existing shopping center building and the construction of several large pad sites on the 27.8 acre site. Since its original construction in 1974, there have been numerous modifications to the site. Information on the underground utilities within and adjacent to the site will allow the redevelopment to occur with minimal disruption of the utility infrastructure. ❖

We'd like you to contribute ideas and articles to your newsletter!
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Sidewalks on Shoal Creek Boulevard

Darrel Haba, Darryl.Haba@ci.austin.tx.us, 974-7205

Thanks to those who attended the March 20 meeting at Gullett Elementary School regarding the installation of sidewalks along Shoal Creek Blvd. As a reminder, the Land Use and Transportation Subcommittee in February recommended the installation of sidewalk along both sides of Shoal Creek Boulevard. The sidewalk will extend from 38th Street to Foster Lane.

As indicated at the meeting, it is the City's strong preference to have sidewalks on both sides of the street and as a quick straw poll showed, over 50 percent of attendees agreed. However, we sent a more formal survey/poll to residents and owners. As this usage will be for the general public, it will also solicit input from neighboring locations. After evaluating results of the poll, the City will determine which option garnered at least a 60 percent majority and proceed from there. Also be reminded that a "one-side only" vote won't determine which side of the street this may be placed but will be made by the City based on good engineering determinations of cost, safety, projected usage, accessibility for people with disabilities, environmental concerns, existing utility conflicts and other similar issues.

Sidewalks, as you know, are installed in the public right of way—that is, the area owned by the public immediately behind the curb and extending usually 10' to 20' back from the curb to the property line. Our sidewalk team is now reviewing the street identifying the constructability, environmental and engineering issues associated with the project. As we mentioned at the meeting, we will work with each property owner individually along the boulevard to review the proposed location of the sidewalk and wherever possible incorporate his/her interests into the plans. Although we will be pleased to discuss specific issues with you if there is some immediacy now, such as being out of town for an extended period, with the large number of individuals we will be contacting and the still-unfinalized determination of which sides to place the sidewalk, we would appreciate your allowing us to contact you well in advance of any work adjacent to your property. ❖

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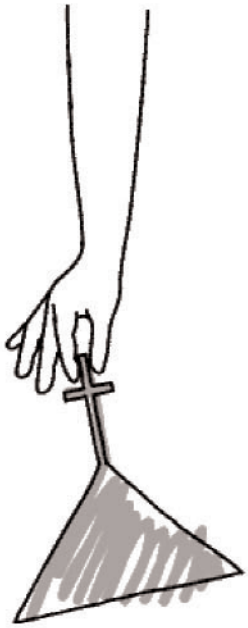
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Safety Tips for Women (and Everyone)

Frank Schleicher fchleicher@earthlink.net

1. Tip from Tae Kwon Do: The elbow is the strongest point on your body. If you are close enough to use it, do!
2. If a robber ask's s for your wallet and/or purse, DO NOT hand it to him . Toss it away from you....chances are that he is more interested in your wallet and/or purse than you, and he will go for the wallet/purse. RUN LIKE MAD IN THE OTHER DIRECTION!
3. If you are ever thrown into the trunk of a car, kick out the back tail lights and stick your arm out the hole and start waving like crazy. The driver won't see you, but everybody else will. This has saved lives.
4. Women have a tendency to get into their cars after shopping, eating, working, etc., and just sit (doing their checkbook, or making a list, etc. DON'T DO THIS!) The predator will be watching you, and this is the perfect opportunity for him to get in on the passenger side, put a gun to your head, and tell you where to go. AS SOON AS YOU GET INTO YOUR CAR, LOCK THE DOORS AND LEAVE.
5. A few notes about getting into your car in a parking lot, or parking garage:
 A.) Be aware: look around you, look into your car, at the passenger side floor, and in the back seat.
 B.) If you are parked next to a big van, enter your car from the passenger door. Most serial killers attack their victims by pulling them into their vans while the women are attempting to get into their cars.
 C.) Look at the car parked on the driver's side of your vehicle, and the passenger side. If a male is sitting alone in the seat nearest your car, you may want to walk back into the mall, or work, and get a guard/policeman to walk you back out. It is always better to be safe than sorry.
6. ALWAYS take the elevator instead of the stairs. (Stairwells are horrible places to be alone and the perfect crime spot. This is especially true at NIGHT!)
7. If the predator has a gun and you are not under his control, ALWAYS RUN! The predator will only hit you (a running target) 4 in 100 times; And even then, it most likely WILL NOT be a vital organ. RUN, Preferably ! in a zig -zag pattern!
8. As women, we are always trying to be sympathetic: STOP. It may get you raped, or killed.
9. Another Safety Point: Someone just told me that her friend heard a crying baby on her porch the night before last, and she called the police because it was late and she thought it was weird. The police told her "Whatever you do, DO NOT open the door." ❖



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Frankie Landry

Dale Kirtland, DDKirtland@aol.com

On March 15, 2006, 40 friends and relatives gathered in the middle of Parkview Drive with flowers, cards and gifts to surprise Frankie Landry for her 100th birthday. Frankie has been an Allandale resident since 1960. She spent a year traveling from Beaumont to find the right house in Austin.

Born in Buna Texas, Frankie grew up in a sawmill home in Louisiana with three sisters. She walked a mile to school and especially liked math. This served her well as she and her three sisters attended Business School in Tyler. Upon graduation, Frankie worked for three CPAs until her retirement

Frankie became Mrs, Landry in 1933. Her husband's and her favorite activity was dancing on the roof of a hotel in Beaumont and going to a dinner dance in a New Orleans Hotel.

She attributes her longevity to faith in the Lord, not smoking and not drinking in excess. She has created a natural habitat for birds and squirrels, which she feeds, by the large picture window where she sits.

She enjoys her visitors and her correspondence with friends and family. She finds joy and gratitude in everything

Those of us who have the privilege of knowing this inspiring lady find that she recharges our batteries and when we leave her words are, "Take on the day and let the good dimes roll."

Her wisdom, tales of the past and sense of humor are priceless. We'll be getting ready for 101! ❖

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*Based on Search in Austin Multiple Listing Service of Houses from 01/01/05-12/31/05 in 78757 Zip Code with Gullett Elementary.

A Moment in Austin History

Ed Van de Vort, epvdv@austintexas.org

The early years of the twentieth century saw significant changes in the day-to-day life of the city and the physical appearance of the downtown. In 1913, Mayor Wooldgridge led the crusade against vice and brought about the closing of "Guy Town," the red light district west of Colorado Street and South of Fifth (Pine) St. It was rumored at the time that not all Austin men cheered, but most of them refrained from voicing condemnation.

Under Wooldridge as mayor from 1909-1919 municipal services improved. Brackenridge Hospital opened in 1915 next to the 1884 City Hospital. Street paving went ahead at a faster pace. However the flood of 1915 did cause some street damage and destroyed the spillway gates on the top of the nearly completed Austin Dam.

Jane Y. McCallum, as President of the Austin Woman Suffrage Association, with the support of Mayor Wooldridge led the fight to win equal suffrage for women in Texas. McCallum went on to be the first woman to serve as Secretary of State for Texas.

A long tradition of volunteer fire brigades was replaced in 1916 by a paid city department. There were twenty-seven men, five motor-powered vehicles and three pieces of horse-drawn equipment in the new department. This establishment of fire suppression on a professional level was timely and the city was expanding to the west. Lots went on sale for the first time in the Enfield Section, which had been part of the Pease Estate.

Austinites voted 2,088 to 1,988 to go dry in January 1918. Seventy saloons were required to close within thirty days. This event plus the acquisition of Barton Springs and parkland from Andrew Zilker may have caused the mayor to encourage development of a citywide system of recreational areas that would include free swimming pools and tennis courts. This became the Parks and Recreation Department. Wooldridge was also responsible for the effort to clean up the public square that today is named is his honor.

Another first for the city was the opening of a Piggly Wiggly store on Sixth (Pecan) St. in 1918. This was Austin's introduction to supermarkets. And the tradition of Sixth (Pecan) as a shopping street continued and was reinforced by the addition of J.C. Penney's a few years later. ❖

List of preferred puppy patios

Gretchen Vaden gvaden@austin.rr.com

The Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department (HHSD) has implemented a voluntary registry of restaurants allowing dogs onto outdoor dining areas in compliance with a new city ordinance. The registry, initiated when the new ordinance was passed in March, utilizes a

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list to be posted on the Health Department's web site. In order to add a restaurant to the registry, owners or operators simply fill out an online form, accessible at www.ci.austin.tx.us/health/doprr/register_info.cfm, and submit it to the city. The form will then be sent to HHSD personnel for telephone verification. Once it has been confirmed that the restaurant does allow dogs onto outdoor eating areas and does want to be listed on the registry, HHSD will add the name and phone number of the establishment to the online listing. ❖

Community-Wide Fire Ant Treatment

Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M University, Texas Cooperative Extension, 854-9600

Community-wide fire ant management programs can be a way to overcome the battle between homeowners and fire ants, tilting the advantage in favor of the homeowners. Homeowner associations can form community-wide programs to successfully reduce fire ant populations within neighborhoods.

When fire ant control methods are executed by individual landowners, there can be rapid reinfestation from nearby, untreated areas. With a community-wide program, reinfestation boundaries are pushed further away, resulting in longer periods of time between reinvasion and treatment.

Areas with more than five fire ant mounds in a yard should consider broadcast baiting. It usually takes a longer time to see results when using baits compared to individual mound treatments, but baiting can provide around 90 percent suppression for 6-18 months. Very little chemical is placed into the environment when using baits as most baits are broadcast at a rate of 1- 1 ½ pounds per acre.

Individual mound treatments treat one mound at a time. This method should be used when there are less than five mounds in a yard or with the Two-Step method to treat mounds in sensitive areas. To assure the proper amount of chemical is utilized, read and follow all label instructions.

The "Two-Step Method" is a good method for community-wide treatment of fire ants. This method consists of a broadcast bait treatment twice a year - usually in spring and fall - followed by spot treatment of individual mounds that require immediate attention.

Take back your community from fire ants… start a community-wide fire ant program. For more information or to organize a community-wide program, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas Cooperative Extension Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. ❖

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Census Workers Need Your Help

Margaret Borden, m.borden@sbcglobal.net

As a temporary worker for the U.S. Census Bureau, I am requesting your cooperation. From late April through July 8 Census Bureau workers will be doing follow-up interviews door-to-door, testing hand-held computers with those people who did not return the Census form recently mailed to their homes. There are approximately 1,800 households in our area that require follow-up visits. People are cautious about opening their doors to strangers, especially during evenings and weekends, when most of this work will be done. All Census workers will be carrying a bag with a large Census logo and wearing an ID badge. Thank you. ❖



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MoNAC (MoPAC Neighborhood Association Coalition) Meeting, 4/18/06

Announcements. Frances Allen held up a Texas map. Frances pointed out that all the cities shown have Loops, except Austin. Frances stated that is the problem that Austin is trying to work its way out of now.

Frances provided a handout from LandAmerica Austin Title, called Austin Horizons Proposed Roads 2006-2030. This excellent brochure is available online www.austintitle.com, click on Public Resources, click on Click & Print Documents, click on Proposed Roads.

(Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority) CTRMA provided a copy of their 2005 Annual Report and a flyer about the Central Texas Toll Road Program. CTRMA's website: www.mobilityauthority.com/?menu_id=1 provides a number of resources. To sign up for their newsletter go to www.mobilityauthority.com/?menu_id=28

Loop 1/MoPAC Corridor Project Update given by the Loop 1 Study Project Team, John Kelly, DMJM Harris and Karen Savage, DMJM Harris

According to John Kelly, the Loop 1 project is moving forward. They spoke with Bob Daigh, TxDOT's (Texas Department of Transportation) Austin District Engineer, about freeing up Mark Herber's time so he can concentrate on the Loop 1 study. Bob wants a faster timeline on the sample sound walls. In response to this, DMJM will have plans drawn up and ready to contract out in thirty days. The sample walls will be built on TxDOT's property on Bull Creek, near Westminster Manor. There will be three two-sided walls, 10-18' high, with a walkway and benches. This will allow people whose property abuts MoPAC/TxDOT property to see what the walls will actually look like at different times of the day when they would sitting in their backyards. A computer analysis will decide the actual height of the walls. DMJM Harris will start aesthetic committees and sound mitigation groups in the near future. The noise readings will begin next week; please respond if you have received a letter. The question was raised about readings when the trees are bare in the winter. John said there would only be the readings that are beginning next week, but that computer modeling will be used from that point on. This will all follow federal guidelines. In order to obtain maximum federal dollars this will include justifying the maximum amount of noise mitigation or insertion loss, and for projected traffic volumes in the future. They are looking into using quiet pavement to mute the noise spillage. Along Allandale will be one of the longest sections of wall—from Anderson to Northland. TxDOT's (Right-of-Way) ROW along Allandale is west of the trains; however the noise wall will be placed between Allandale and the trains. This will help mitigate the sound of the two trains idling along Great Northern, but will not help

with the vibrations felt by the neighbors in their homes. In the future—commuter rail cars will not cause the same level of vibrations or noise levels the neighbors are currently experiencing. DMJM has completed approximately one-quarter of the interviews being conducted with people who use the corridor—neighbors, people from Leander, Cedar Park, etc. A question was raised prior to the meeting concerning bike trails. John Kelly said that would be looked into during the long-term phase of the project but not during the sound wall phase. The sound wall phase will include sound walls, minor work on bridges, and drainage issues.

Toll Roads. Facts and Fallacies presented by Steven Pustelnyk, Director of Communications, Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA)

The first toll roads in the U.S. were built in the 1700s. Why do we now need toll roads? The nation is in the midst of a serious mobility crisis; with road needs exceeding tax dollars. For further facts about the Toll Road Plan see www.ctrma.org/documents/TheFactsAbouttheTollRoadPlan.pdf. CTRMA is a multi-modal transportation agency, authorized under state legislation passed in 2001. CTRMA includes Williamson County and Travis County. They are multi-modal, but their current focus is on toll roads. Their goal is to remain a small agency by contracting out. CTRMA is part of an MPO – Metropolitan Planning Organization, which functions as a centralized cohesive transportation network. The MPO also includes TxDOT, Capital Metro, and local government. Austin has the worst traffic congestion of any mid-sized city in the nation (Texas Transportation Institute). During the last 20 years Austin's area population has doubled and the roadway usage has increased by 160 percent (Texas Transportation Institute). Over the next 20 years it will require an additional $18 billion in transportation improvements just to keep congestion levels at their current level (CAMPO). The 20 cents per gallon state gas tax hasn't been increased since 1991, in today's dollars it is equivalent to approximately 15 cents (Governor's Business Council). In 2003 Texas roadway maintenance costs exceeded the gas tax revenue. People will have a choice—tolled roadway or non-tolled roadway. To take a toll road is a choice made by the individual, paying the state gas tax is not a choice. You pay for what you use. Tolling frees up the gas tax for other projects. Tolled roads will for the most part use TxTag http://www.txtag.org/. Toll roads maximize capacity in a corridor. Frances Allen stated MoNAC's position is to get more people through the Loop 1 corridor, not more cars. Loop 1 is a TxDOT project . CTRMA has held focus groups concerning 360—CAMPO has removed funding for 360 from the 2030 plan. CTRMA set 183A as a priority, for information on 183A see www.183a.com/. ❖

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By Cheryl Silver, csilver@austin.rr.com

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Savory Frosty Paws

1 can unsalted chicken or unsalted beef broth—
diluted with 1 can of water
1 unsweetened mashed sweet potato (bake in microwave)
jar of baby food cooked carrots
Mix well and pour into ice cube trays and freeze. ❖



Constable's Notebook

Constable Bruce Elfant, bruce.elfant@co.travis.tx.us

In 1965 President Lyndon Johnson declared war on poverty in America. More than 40 years later the Travis County Commissioners Court in recognizing that this war is not over declared January as Poverty Awareness Month.

According to the federal poverty guidelines, a family of four that earns $19,350 or less is considered to be living at or below the poverty level. The Basic Needs Coalition (Community Action Network committee, www.basicneeds-ctx.org) reports that more than 100,000 (12.6%) of Travis County residents were living below the federal poverty level in 2004. Single-parent households headed by a female and people with disabilities are nearly twice as likely to be living at or below poverty. While the Austin school district is currently considered to be a "property rich" school district, 58% of AISD students are considered "economically disadvantaged" and are eligible for free or reduced lunches. The school drop out rate remains high and nearly 50,000 Central Texas adults have not even completed the 9th grade. Texas ranks number one nationwide as a state with twenty-five percent of its population including 5.6 million children lacking health insurance.

President Johnson's "war on poverty" contributed to the reduction of the poverty rate from about 25% to about 10% by 1973. Unfortunately increases in the costs of housing, health care, food, transportation, etc., which has significantly outpaced wage increases, along with cuts in many federal and state programs, has contributed to an increasing poverty rate here and around the nation.

Coping with poverty costs us all money and speaks volumes about how smart and compassionate we are as a community. For example, our jails are not filled with high school graduates and our hospital emergency rooms are not filled with people who have health insurance. Less than 25% of the people in jail graduated high school or obtained their GED. And more than two thirds of those going to tax-supported emergency rooms for treatment do not have health insurance. The fact is that there is a direct correlation with drop out rates and the costs of crime prevention, incarceration and health care. On average, those who have at least a high school education will earn significantly more money and are more likely to have health insurance than those lacking an education.

The more we are willing to intelligently invest our money and time in programs designed to keep kids in school the less we will have to invest in crime prevention, incarceration and uninsured health care costs. ❖

Check out www.allandalereporter.org

How to Identify Ant and Termite Swarmers

Wizzie Brown, Texas A &M, Texas Cooperative Extension, 854-9600

With warm temperatures and rainfall, ant and termite swarmers will be seen flying in Central Texas. Swarmer is another term used to describe the reproductive stage of ants and termites. These insects have wings when they initially leave the colony, but the wings are either shed or chewed off before they form a nest. Some people may have trouble distinguishing the two types of insects, but with a few key characteristics, it is very simple.

Ant swarmers have elbowed antennae and a narrow, or constricted, waist. The wings of ants are not similar in size or shape and have few veins. If the wings are missing from the ant swarmer, there will not be a wing stub left on the thorax from where the wing was attached.

Termite swarmers have antennae that are not elbowed and a waist that is not narrowed. The wings on termites are of similar size and shape and have many veins. Termite swarmers will also have a wing stub left on the thorax once the wing detaches from the body. ❖

Oak Leaf Roller

Wizzie Brown, Texas A &M, Texas Cooperative Extension, 854-9600

I have been receiving numerous calls on oak leaf rollers lately. People want to know how to avoid the populations we have had the past two years. These caterpillars are greenish-yellow with a brown head capsule and dangle from oak trees. These caterpillars are more of a nuisance than a true pest. Most healthy trees can withstand defoliation without significant damage, but there is concern this year since the drought may also be causing stress to trees.

Some nurseries in the Austin area are suggesting release of Trichogramma wasps. Trichogramma are small, parasitic wasps that lay their eggs in a variety of insect eggs. The wasp egg hatches within the pest insect's egg and feeds within the pest egg, eventually causing death of the developing pest. While Trichogramma are great for managing a variety of pests, I have been unable to locate any information on the wasp controlling oak leaf rollers. Oak leaf roller eggs remain on the tree from May to the following March, so the egg has to be fairly tough, possibly decreasing the likelihood of them being controlled with Trichogramma. Also, releasing beneficial insects is best done within an enclosed space and people may have a difficult time building an enclosure for a mature oak tree.

Applying horticultural oil could smother the eggs, but since many of the oaks are mature, treatment would most likely need to be carried out by a professional. If this is true,

it would probably be best to wait and see if there is an actual infestation of caterpillars before spending money to control the caterpillars. Once caterpillars emerge, control would need to change to use of Bacillus thuringiensis (Bt) variety kurstaki, which targets only caterpillars (though it does not differentiate between pest caterpillars and those that people enjoy having, such as ones that become butterflies). When using Bt, good coverage is key as the caterpillars need to consume a lethal amount of the toxin. Other possible control methods would be active ingredients such as spinosad (spinosyns) or carbaryl. ❖







It's My Park Day—The Cleanup of the Bike Lanes of Great Northern Boulevard

Mark Miller, 423-7262

On April 22nd there was a city wide event "It's My Park Day" sponsored by Austin Park Foundation to clean up public parks. The Austin Cycling Association, the largest big club in town with 1500 members, volunteered to take on the cleanup of the bike lanes of Great Northern Boulevard. This is approximately a two mile stretch of road that parallels Mopac on the east side.

This turned out to be a group effort of active members of the club and cyclists from the neighborhood that rarely venture out of the neighborhood. The volunteers came in stages and needed little supervision. Two members of the club showed up around 8 AM a full hour ahead of schedule and started to clear glass and debris from the north end of the roadway. They worked for over an hour and then took off on a bike ride. Three volunteers including myself showed up on time at 9 AM, started clearing shrubbery that grown out into the bike lanes and removing debris (mostly organic matter but some mud) from the bike lanes. Two more volunteers showed up around 10 AM and they went to work picking up trash along the road. Lastly, a very nice person was driving along around 11 AM and thought they would help. We gave him a set limb loppers and he went about attacking a section of shrubs that had grown out into the street.

We managed to eliminate most the limbs that had grown out into the bike lanes, picked up about two garbage bags of litter, cleared glass and gravel, removed a fair amount of mud that had collected from the recent rains and removed a fair amount of leaves and other organic matter from the lanes. All of this took about two to three hours of labor by eight people from both the neighborhood and the Austin Cycling Association. All in all it was a successful effort that really did not take very long and we all felt we had made a contribution to the neighborhood where we live or bicycle. ❖

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- ❑ Sheffield NW District Park
- ❑ City planning
- ❑ Shoal Creek cleanup
- ❑ Write local history
- ❑ July 4th Parade
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